



OJJDP FACT SHEET

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Promising Practices: Drug-Free Communities Support Program

by James M. Simonson and Pat M. Maher

The Drug-Free Communities Support Program (DFCSP) helps strengthen community antidrug coalitions working to reduce substance abuse among youth. The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), in partnership with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), awards grants of up to \$100,000 to community coalitions that support prevention of youth alcohol and drug abuse. The following summaries highlight the variety of innovative strategies that DFCSP-funded coalitions use to assist their communities in becoming drug free. Examples of these strategies include educational support, public relations/outreach campaigns, enforcement efforts, coalition building, and other community initiatives.

Peers Are Staying Straight (PASS), Prattville, AL. The PASS coalition administers the Autauga County Teen Court Program, one of the first of its kind in Alabama. Student volunteers are trained by local attorneys, juvenile probation officers, and adult volunteers and must complete communication skills training and pass the Teen Court Bar Exam to participate in the court process. Local attorneys and judges serve as teen court judges. Juveniles arrested for misdemeanor offenses may be referred to the program for adjudication by the court. Although shoplifting has been the primary offense handled by the court, the majority of referred juveniles have admitted to past or current substance use. Dispositions include substance abuse prevention education, community service, jury duty, law-related education, life skills training, and apologies to parents and victims. Defendants are monitored closely and receive individual and family counseling designed to achieve long-term changes.

Vallejo Community Consortium, Vallejo, CA. This consortium, working with the Fighting Back Partnership of Vallejo project, helped draft the language for and supported passage of the 1999 Teen Party Ordinance, which authorizes the police department to recoup any costs associated with calls for service involving teenage parties where alcohol and illegal substances are used. Parents of teens are asked to repay the costs of the service calls for each reported incident. The Fighting Back Partnership of Vallejo and the local school district plan to mail copies of the

ordinance and a pledge to the parents of all middle and high school students in the district. Parents are asked to sign the pledge, signifying that they will make their home a safe place for teens.

Adolescent Counseling Exchange (ACE), Denver, CO. The ACE coalition provides services to a majority Hispanic population at risk for substance use/abuse, gang involvement, gun violence, low school achievement, dropping out of school, and teenage pregnancy. ACE became a charter school in September 2000 and serves 100 at-risk, hard-to-reach middle school students. ACE has integrated its substance abuse and violence prevention curriculum into the school's educational structure and provides a daycare center for young children so that teen parents can attend classes and participate in afterschool activities. In addition, the coalition has intervened in and mediated conflicts between two rival gangs to substantially reduce the number of driveby shootings in the community.

Troy Community Coalition (TCC), Troy, MI. This coalition has successfully raised funds to support a number of drug abuse prevention activities, such as a prayer breakfast to recognize the importance of the religious community in prevention programming and to celebrate diversity. It also held a basketball shooting contest, sponsored in part by the Detroit Pistons professional basketball team, to provide a drug-free family activity. The coalition's alcohol-free celebrity dinners and silent auctions feature speakers with national and local reputations and draw more than \$100,000 in business support.

North Central Community Based Services (NCCBS), Chama, NM. This coalition serves Rio Arriba County in northern New Mexico. The majority of the population is Hispanic and American Indian. The NCCBS coalition has developed a unique approach to address the area's graffiti problem, which is often an indicator of substance abuse and gang activity. The coalition partners, including schools, businesses, the faith community, and youth-serving organizations, supervise area youth in a mural creation project. The youth create murals expressing their lives and experiences on

the walls of schools, private businesses, and public areas. Almost immediately, the graffiti problem has stopped.

Lane County Prevention Coalition, Eugene, OR. This coalition was instrumental in convincing four local television affiliates to coproduce, cohost, and simultaneously air a live, 1-hour town hall meeting about substance abuse prevention, treatment, and enforcement. Many coalition representatives served as the prevention and treatment “experts,” answering questions from broadcasters and viewers. Instead of commercials, a 2-minute vignette that emphasized effective substance abuse prevention strategies and programs was aired. The Lane County Prevention Coalition’s DFCSP grant supported the event by providing information on drug prevention, story lines, and talking points; Web site resources; and referrals to Federal drug abuse programs. As a spin-off, the same television affiliates have created ongoing local public service campaigns around the issue of substance abuse prevention, treatment, and enforcement.

TOGETHER! Youth Violence, Alcohol, Drug Prevention, Lacey, WA. The Neighborhood Centers project of TOGETHER! provides a targeted drug abuse prevention program to children and families living in low-income apartment complexes. TOGETHER! rents an apartment in each complex and offers afterschool and summer programs that promote a drug-free climate for children. Activities range from homework assistance and computer availability to skills building, conflict resolution, and peer pressure resistance training. Girl Scout meetings, arts and crafts, and field trips are offered. Drug abuse information, in addition to information about employment and community resources, is disseminated to parents at family potluck dinners and informal coffee hours. Programs for preschool children are also sponsored at the neighborhood centers.

These are just a few of the program activities sponsored by the 307 projects currently funded by DFCSP. To be added to the mailing list for the Fiscal Year 2001 DFCSP solicitation (SL000454), call 800-638-8736 or e-mail tellncjrs@ncjrs.org.

For Further Information

More information on ONDCP and OJJDP is available from:

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-666-3332
Internet: www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov

Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-638-8736
Internet: www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org

James M. Simonson and Pat M. Maher are Program Managers in OJJDP’s Drug-Free Communities Support Program.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

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